

Commercial Length Effectiveness

The commercial length and effectiveness can be impacted by various elements such as the number of brand mentions or ideas within the ad and even by the ad's format. According to Radio Recall Research, LLC, ad formats depicting a "Slice of Life" have the greatest recall across both :60 second and :30 second ads -- 22% and nearly 19%, respectively, Interview/Testimonials ranked second across both lengths. Announcer/Sing & Sell formatted commercials had the lowest recall scores with :60 and :30 second spots -- nearly 16% and 14%, respectively.

FORMAT

Length	Announcer/ Sing & Sell	Slice of Life	Interview/Testimony	Total
30 Sec Av. Recall Score	13.6	18.9	17.3	15.2
Percent of Ads	64	18	18	100
60 Sec Av. Recall Score	15.7	22.4	20.6	19
Percent of Ads	44	33	23	100

The number of brand mentions contained within the traditional length commercials also has a positive effect on recall. Commercials with less than 3 brand mentions scored the lowest in contrast to those that had 6-10 mentions. Typical spots that contained anywhere from 4-5 mentions delivered 19% for 60-second spots and 17% for 30-second spots.

BRAND MENTIONS

Length	Few	Typical	Many	Total
	(1-3)	(4-5)	(6-10)	
30 Sec Av. Recall Score	12.4	17.3	15.8	15.5
Percent of Ads	31	52	17	100
	(1-4)	(5-7)	(8-10)	
60 Sec Av. Recall Score	17.7	18.6	19.4	18.6
Percent of Ads	24	49	27	100

There is also a direct correlation between the number of ideas contained within a commercial and the recall score. Commercials that limited the ideas to no more than 3-5 delivered the greatest average recall scores of nearly 20% and 17% for :60 and :30 second spots, respectively. Spots that contained 6-10 ideas had the poorest recall.

IDEAS

Length	1 or 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	Total
30 Sec Av. Recall Score	14.9	16.6	12.6	15.5
Percent of Ads	15	64	21	100
60 Sec Av. Recall Score	17.6	19.9	16.2	18.6
Percent of Ads	13	61	26	100

60-second spots have a higher recall than 30-second spots; they also normally have more words than 30-second spots. The number of words in a commercial correlates more to recall than the length of the commercial.

If two commercials are exact in length, the commercial with the greater amount of words will have a higher recall.

Words

Length	Few	Typical	Many	Total
30 Sec Av. Recall Score	13	14.4	17.5	14.7
Percent of Ads	17	68	15	100
60 Sec Av. Recall Score	16.8	18.4	22.3	19.8
Percent of Ads	9	53	38	100

There are two features that are used often in radio commercials: Humor and music. In Radio Recall Research's analysis of over 2500 different radio commercials, humor and type of music proved inconclusive. Specifically, the use of humor provided little help.

RRR suggests that radio commercials that do contain humor should be pretested on target audiences and determine whether or not the target found the spots funny.

Music appears to have no direct impact on recall. The most prevalent format is the "sing and sell" format that performs like an announcement.

Music should not absorb time that can be used to present the advertiser's message, says RRR. Inclusion of music should be limited to background, jingles which emphasize the brand, or gaining listeners' attention.

Source: Radio Recall Research, LLC.
"Characteristics of Radio Commercials And Their Recall Effectiveness"